

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY JUNE 12, 2014

SENATE BILL

No. 868

Introduced by Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review

January 9, 2014

~~An act relating to the Budget Act of 2014. An act to add Section 113 to the Water Code, relating to water, and making an appropriation therefor, to take effect immediately, bill related to the budget.~~

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 868, as amended, Committee on Budget and Fiscal Review.
~~Budget Act of 2014. State water policy: groundwater resources.~~

The California Constitution requires the reasonable and beneficial use of water. Existing law establishes various state water policies, including the policy that the people of the state have a paramount interest in the use of all the water of the state and that the state is required to determine what water of the state, surface and underground, can be converted to public use or controlled for public protection.

This bill would declare that it is the policy of the state that groundwater resources be managed sustainably.

This bill would appropriate \$4,500 from the General Fund to the State Water Resources Control Board for its administrative costs during the 2014–15 fiscal year.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as a bill providing for appropriations related to the Budget Bill.

~~This bill would express the intent of the Legislature to enact statutory changes relating to the Budget Act of 2014.~~

Vote: majority. Appropriation: ~~no~~ yes. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~ yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

(a) The people of the state have a primary interest in the protection, management, and reasonable beneficial use of the water resources of the state, both surface and underground, and that the integrated management of the state's water resources is essential to meeting its water management goals.

(b) Groundwater provides a significant portion of California's water supply. Groundwater accounts for more than one-third of the water used by Californians in an average year and more than one-half of the water used by Californians in a drought year when other sources are unavailable.

(c) Excessive groundwater pumping can cause overdraft, failed wells, deteriorated water quality, environmental damage, and irreversible land subsidence that damages infrastructure and diminishes the capacity of aquifers to store water for the future.

(d) When properly managed, groundwater resources will help protect communities, farms, and the environment against prolonged dry periods and climate change, preserving water supplies for existing and potential beneficial use.

(e) Groundwater resources are most effectively managed at the local or regional level.

(f) Some local agencies manage their groundwater sustainably, either through local management structures or pursuant to an adjudication of water rights, while others have not done so, leading to a variety of serious local groundwater problems.

(g) Groundwater management will not be effective unless local actions to sustainably manage groundwater basins are taken.

(h) Local and regional agencies need to have the necessary support and authority to manage groundwater sustainably.

(i) In those circumstances where a local groundwater management agency is not managing its groundwater sustainably, the state needs to protect the resource until it is determined that a local groundwater management agency can sustainably manage the groundwater basin.

SEC. 2. Section 113 is added to the Water Code, to read:

113. (a) It is the policy of the state that groundwater resources be managed sustainably.

1 **(b)** *Sustainable groundwater management means the*
2 *management of groundwater to provide for multiple long-term*
3 *benefits without resulting in or aggravating conditions that cause*
4 *significant economic, social, or environmental impacts such as*
5 *long-term overdraft, land subsidence, ecosystem degradation,*
6 *depletions from surface water bodies, and water quality*
7 *degradation, in order to protect the resource for future generations.*
8 *Sustainable groundwater management requires the development,*
9 *implementation, and updating of local water budgets, plans, and*
10 *programs based on the best available science, monitoring,*
11 *forecasting, and use of technological resources.*

12 **SEC. 3.** *The amount of four thousand five hundred dollars*
13 *(\$4,500) is hereby appropriated from the General Fund to the*
14 *State Water Resources Control Board for its administrative costs*
15 *during the 2014–15 fiscal year.*

16 **SEC. 4.** *This act is a bill providing for appropriations related*
17 *to the Budget Bill within the meaning of subdivision (e) of Section*
18 *12 of Article IV of the California Constitution, has been identified*
19 *as related to the budget in the Budget Bill, and shall take effect*
20 *immediately.*

21 ~~**SECTION 1.** It is the intent of the Legislature to enact statutory~~
22 ~~changes relating to the Budget Act of 2014.~~